111. Some educational suggestions with special reference to the study of the vernacular being made compulsory in all English Schools up to Form VI.

Mr. N. Kumaran Asan (Member, Nominated) began by thanking the Government for the grant of half-fee concession to the pupils of the Ezhava community for English education, and said that, but for that concession, many pupils of his community would have found it diffficult to go in for English education. He also referred with gratitude to the remission of fees and the half-fee concession granted to the members of the other depressed and backward communities in the State.

The Member then referred to the encouragement given to the Malayalam language by the Rulers of the State in the past and contrasted it with its present deplorable condition in spite of the fact that Government spent nearly Rs. 32 lakhs every year on education. The Member traced the decline to the fact that it was not taught as a compulsory subject in English schools as had been the case some years ago. He referred to the circumstance that, in the Matriculation as well as in the College classes, Malayalam was taught as a compulsory subject formerly, and urged that more importance should be given to the study of one's own mother tongue than to the study of a subject like nature study which was being taught as a compulsory subject in all English schools in the State. In the present grouping of optional subjects a prominent place was not assigned to the vernacular. The Member suggested that Malayalam might be taught as a compulsory subject in all High Schools in the State, and that it might be adopted as the medium of communication in all official correspondence.

In conclusion, the Member expressed his joy in seeing that 13 additional schools had been thrown open recently to all classes of His Highness the Maha Raja's subjects. In regard to the schools that still remained closed, he requested that the other representatives of the depressed and backward communities in the Assembly might be also heard before the question of their being thrown open was taken up and decided.

Dewan's reply.—The only new point in your speech which I have to meet is the compulsory teaching of Malayalam in English schools. I quite sympathise with you, and I share your regret that Malayalam literature is not now compulsory in these schools as it was in the olden days. I myself belong to the olden days when the study of a vernacular or classical language and its literature was compulsory, right up to the B. A. standard. I think it is a pity that this is not insisted upon now. But it is not the fault of the Government, nor is it the fault of certain educational committees as you seem to surmise. We have had to conform our curriculum to the curriculum in British India; we have to educate our students to fit them for the course of studies approved by the Madras University. A separate University is now under contemplation and if we separate ourselves from the Madras University and have a University of our own for this part of the country, I daresay we can revise the curricula in such a way as to make the study of the vernacular compulsory. I would only ask you to wait until we are able to start our own University when we will have a free hand in the matter.

112. Vocational education.

Mr. Hajee Ahamad Mohideen Mahomed Rowther (Member, Pattanapuram Taluk) referred to the various evils resulting from a purely literary education, which had filled the country with an army of unemployed youths. It had created in those youths an aversion to follow the profession of their ancestors. While conceding that it was not possible to introduce a system of universal technical education in the near future, he was sure that healthy notions about the dignity of labour and the benefits of technical education might be instilled into the minds of the youths now attending schools. Referring to the Dewan's speech at the opening of the Nair Samajam School at Changanachery wherein the urgent need of establishing vocational schools was alluded to, the Member pointed out that the responsibility of conducting vocational schools should not be thrown entirely on the shoulders of private agencies, but

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that the Government should start experimental vocational institutions and make them models for imitation by private agencies. The Member next urged the appointment of a committee of experts to go into the question of technical and vocational education before the University Committee began its work, so that the report of that body of experts on vocational education might be of use to the University Committee also. The Member then made the following suggestions.

(i) Teaching should be chiefly confined to language and arithmetic up to class IV and the object of such education should be to create a desire in the minds of the children attending those classes for imbibing technical education at a later stage.

(ii) From class IV, three parallel courses should be opened for training in industries, the humanities and the public service, respectively, and selection should be made for those courses of study with due regard to the heredity, intelligence and taste of each individual.

(iii) Technical schools should be opened for coupling theoretical instruction with practical training.

The Member concluded by reiterating his request for the immediate appointment of a committee of experts to investigate the question of technical and industrial education which was admitted on all hands to be important for the material welfare of every country.

Dewan's reply.—The representation of the Member centres on one point, *viz.*, the appointment of a committee to examine the question of vocational education. A committee for that purpose is not necessary. Pupils now receive instruction in kindergarten and manual training. When these pupils pass out of schools for general education, they could receive vocational instruction in the various technical and industrial institutions in the country. The Government are always keeping the matter of vocational education prominently in their mind and they would do all that was feasible.

113. Vocational instruction in schools.

Mr. T. A. Ganapati Aiyar (Member, Municipal Council, Vaikam) condemned the present system of education as being exclusively literary, and as neglecting the practical training of the hand and the eye. As no attention was being paid to the development of the natural resources of the country by means of industrial education, the country was being day by day impoverished, as raw materials, instead of being converted into finished products here, were being exported to foreign countries. It also led to the decay of skilled indigenous crafts and cottage industries, as youths who had received a purely literary education had neither the aptitude nor the inclination to follow the profession of their ancestors. The cumulative result of the one-sided and exclusive bookish education now imparted was to fill the country with a host of discontented and unemployed young men who were a burden to the State, and a source of danger and trouble to the country. The only effective solution lay in the imparting of vocational instruction in all schools. In offering his remarks on such a thorny subject, the Member said that he was not unaware of the several difficulties that stood in the way of his scheme being carried out successfully. But the paramount importance of the need for action in that direction was such that a beginning had to be immediately made, and as a preliminary step, manual training might be introduced. It was being now taught in the vernacular schools, but was not productive of any substantial benefit to the pupils. The system of vocational instruction should be so planned as to create in the students a desire to pursue their hereditary profession. It should enable them to start home industries and to secure admission into factories and warehouses, without a further course of apprenticeship. The land colonisation scheme under contemplation ought to be supplemented by a wide-spread system of vocational training. The Member then outlined the successive stages of such education and the curricula of studies that might be introduced in schools. Vocational subjects should include printing, electric fitting, signalling, telegraphy, motor-driving, plating, gilding and other technical and commercial subjects, and instruction should be imparted through the medium of the vernacular. Vocational instruction in girls'

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